

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /059 W

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P 262110Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1467

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POUCHED INFO ALL CONSULATES IN CANADA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJ: FOUR VACANT FEDERAL SEATS, THREE SAFE FOR LIBERALS  
AND THE OTHER A TOSS-UP

REF: QUEBEC 279

1. FORMER LIBERAL MINISTER JEAN MARCHAND'S OCTOBER 25 RESIGNATION FROM HIS FEDERAL SEAT TO RUN IN THE QUEBEC PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS (REFTEL) BROUGHT TO FOUR THE NUMBER OF COMMONS SEATS WHICH HAVE BECOME VACANT WITHIN THE PAST MONTH.

2. VACANT SEATS ARE MARCHAND'S IN LANGELIER, LOCATED IN QUEBEC CITY; THE LOUIS-HEBERT RIDING ALSO IN QUEBEC CITY WHICH BECAME VACANT WITH THE RECENT DEATH OF LIBERAL MP MADAME ALBANIE MORIN; THE PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND RIDING OF MALPEQUE WHICH PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE (PC) MEMBER ANGUS MACLEAN GAVE UP AFTER HE WAS ELECTED PC LEADER IN THAT PROVINCE (HE IS NOW SEEKING A PROVINCIAL SEAT); AND THE TERREBONNE RIDING (NORTH OF MONTREAL) WHICH LIBERAL MP JOSEPH-ROLAND COMPTOIRS, LIKE MARCHAND, RELINQUISHED TO RUN IN THE QUEBEC PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS.

3. IN ADDITION, FORMER LIBERAL MIN. BYRCE MACKASEY MAY SOON GIVE UP HIS VERDUN RIDING (IN MONTREAL) TO RUN

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IN THE QUEBEC ELECTIONS.

4. IN SHORT, THERE ARE FOUR VACANT SEATS, THREE OF THEM FORMERLY HELD BY LIBERALS IN QUEBEC, AND THERE MAY SOON BE A FOURTH QUEBEC SEAT, FORMERLY LIBERAL.

5. PM TRUDEAU MUST, WITHIN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, DECLARE BY-ELECTIONS FOR THE SEATS. THERE IS NO LEGAL TIME LIMIT ON WHEN THE BY-ELECTIONS MUST BE HELD BUT, AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, DELAY CANNOT BE EXTENDED. LEAVING A RIDING WITHOUT REPRESENTATION FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD CAN GENERATE VOTER BACKLASH.

6. COMMENT: THE QUEBEC RIDINGS SHOULD BE SAFE FOR THE LIBERALS. PC NATIONAL DIRECTOR JOHN LASCHINGER, HIGHLY PARTISAN AND ALWAYS OPTIMISTIC, TOLD EMBOFF THAT ONLY IN TERREBONNE AND IN VERDUN, IF MACKASEY RESIGNS, WOULD THE PCS HAVE EVEN AN OUTSIDE CHANCE. IN VIEW OF PAST PERFORMANCE IN THOSE RIDINGS, WE FIND EVEN LASCHINGER'S GUARDED COMMENT OVERLY OPTIMISTIC.

7. THE MACLEAN SEAT IN PEI NOW IS A TOSS-UP. VOTING THERE IS HIGHLY PERSONAL AND NEITHER PARTY HAS CHOSEN CANDIDATES. ALTHOUGH MACLEAN REPRESENTED THE AREA FOR ABOUT 25 YEARS, LIBERAL MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE HOLD THE REGION. CHOICE OF CANDIDATES WILL, THEREFORE, BE ALL IMPORTANT.  
ENDERS

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TENURE OF OFFICE, PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 OCT 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ellisoob  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976OTTAWA04263  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760400-0137  
**From:** OTTAWA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19761017/aaaaaooof.tel  
**Line Count:** 88  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 QUÉBEC 279  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ellisoob  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <14 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <10 AUG 2004 by ellisoob>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** FOUR VACANT FEDERAL SEATS, THREE SAFE FOR LIBERALS AND THE OTHER A TOSS-UP  
**TAGS:** PINT, CA  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006